Tips to keep in mind when lobbying

#1 Research-Before making your pitch to introduce new legislation make sure you do your research to see if anyone else is working on it first. If no one is than you are laying the groundwork so be sure to check your facts and make sure they are accurate. Faulty facts could discredit your entire argument and set back all the work you have done.

If you do find that others are already working towards the same legislation it’s a good idea to reach out to them before proceeding further. With a lot of animal rights and conservation issues there is a lot of groundwork that goes into building a strong supportive platform for the legislation and they may be in a different stage of the game than you are and you don’t want to undo any progress they have already made and visa- versa. Think of it like a game of chess, you have to plan your next few moves ahead of time and prepare for any possible outcomes, so everyone being on the same page is critical.

#2 Gathering support- seeking out groups within your community as well as nationally is always a good idea. Once you have done your research and established your plan reach out to other groups for support. There is strength in numbers and 2 heads are always better than one. Someone else may come up with a strategy that you had not thought of and again visa- versa.

#3 Committee summaries-When researching prior similar legislation check the committee meeting summaries they can offer insight as to why prior efforts either succeeded or failed. The summaries can be found normally on the website you are viewing the bill on and should be listed under each committee meeting notes.

#4 Bill Tracking- When utilizing a bill tracking service or searching on state/federal legislative pages try to be creative in your searches. A lot of times the key words you choose to use will determine the results you find. Some services work better if you use quotation marks around specific words like “farm animals” as opposed to just typing farm animals. The quotations will help you narrow your results. Try as many variations of words as you can to locate particular bills. If you are not using legislative tracking like TrackBill and you are just Googling you will find a lot of articles more than likely before you actually stumble on a bill number that pertains to the bill you are looking for. Look through the articles for links they will eventually usually lead you to the bill in question than you can go to the state/federal page, type in the number of the bill and read the text from there. Definitely read the text because going off of just what you have read in articles is not always accurate and can be biased towards the opinions of the writer of the article. It is always best practice to read the actual text and then research any questions you may have from there.